

# What's Behind It...

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## Tenth Floor, Administration Building #1

These papers we move  
around: indisputably your  
life. You are more form  
(to be filled out by me)  
than flesh & blood; I go  
home at night to drink,  
thinking of nothing, not  
you. I am form, too, to  
be pushed around, &  
yes pennies cover my  
eyes, & I look for depth,  
perceive none.

Covered  
in cuts, I am Mr. Paper,  
I cut, am cut, will cut,  
am cutting. I will hurt  
you like you won't believe.  
I hurt, too, somewhere beneath.

## Holy, Lonely

She kneels in prayer, is  
distracted by a dust-mote,  
mind moving back before  
two wars that took every-  
thing. *Mum, look at the  
butterfly. Father, look at  
the caterpillar.* It is night.

Father looks at a book  
ordered specially to disturb  
him. God is Dead, & yes  
it may be. Godless World,  
so it seems. Certainly no  
God in a dusty room; how  
could God fit in here?

She fits the coffin right  
well, he thinks. No reason  
for her life to go on. No  
reason for any life to, really.  
We've made our lives up  
from nothing, including  
what's holy: because we're lonely.

## Dirty Frank's: Whiskey Dream

There was a knife in  
my back but it wasn't  
my back, a song being  
sung that wasn't a song,  
then I was floating in a  
bunch of colors, now I  
think I see myself there.  
Yes, I definitely am, I'm  
there but not quite here  
in moving, in floating, I  
think I heard a voice w  
the knife, it was in my  
head, talking to me but  
I was on something's  
side, couldn't hear. Now  
I am deliciously dead in  
ecstasy, because not yet—

## **In the studio off of North Broad**

You don't connect it:  
our lovemaking with  
identity questions, any  
more than my fingers  
pointing at the moon  
are, in fact, a kind of  
moon, that can enter  
your physical entity &  
give you a new (albeit  
brief) identity. I weave  
in & out of you, in &  
out of me, you don't  
get time to say I'm this  
or that, because how  
can I be, being entity?

## To Marianne

I love the seven veils  
of satin you have laid  
me with. I love sharp  
spikes leaping from  
your eyes when I laugh  
at a chance flippant  
remark. I love these  
things expecting them  
to change. I love changes  
happening every time I  
run my hands through  
your hair. It's everywhere.

## Matter Falling Into Place

The yellow submarine goes  
down into depths sorted for  
me by old books, looking for  
axioms, octopi, trying to get off-  
script, as if the entire ocean  
were merely stage directions,  
a cast of trillions, matter falling  
into place, impinging, oozy routes—

## Chapter & Verse, Toadies

Don't back me into a  
fucking corner, don't  
tell me to see what you  
see, I've been around  
the block (dizzy as any  
windmill, right as any  
rain, febrile, fleeting &  
fleeing), I don't care  
about how you died &  
came back, I don't want  
to put my hands on your  
death-wound (or death-  
wish or death-cry), just  
sit there quietly like a  
good toad & note  
the way the grandfather  
clock goes: tick, tock.



## **In the studio off of North Broad Pt. 2**

this woman, webbed clean,  
with velvet, fabric, woven pink patterns of  
both, who reclines, accepting  
who I may be, in the midst of  
manhood (which dwells in night's  
skewered wood), sun-dappled leaves lull

us back to a shared, novel childhood,  
(we hear buses go by somewhere  
distant), pure unbounded joy looms  
over us, phantom of our opera, as  
I find myself a lever, gears working,  
sunlight channels through tints red/white—

## Rapunzel

How you move at any moment:  
invert strong emotion into weak

action, every time, so that people  
above you perceive no threat, yet

keep all those feelings, make a forest of  
green passion in your pulpy heart;

& as you castle me, you're Rapunzel,  
I want to stamp on your hair, instead

I take your last black pawn, pawn it for  
a sidelong glance of your gorged, golden torso—

## South Moon Under: Red Zinger

I made eggs for breakfast—  
I won't be eating them, though.  
It takes two to know, you know.  
If I'm left high & dry in thin  
air, it's my fault, not yours.  
Tell him I wish him (you)  
well, I think he's (you're)  
very lucky, not all of us  
have a passionate fate.  
Some of us look forward  
to scrambled eggs, maybe  
even tea if we feel ambitious.  
Here, Red Zinger: delicious.

## Whiskey Dream #2

“You can use panes of  
shaded glass, if you think  
transparency too much of  
a cop-out, but for God’s  
sake don’t forget that, if  
you’re lucky, there may  
be someone reading, who  
wants to know about you,  
(*just you*, like *just spring*)  
not have a frigid finicky finger  
pointed back in his/her  
face. You don’t have to  
be Romantic to be romantic...”

he rapidly drank a shot of whiskey

## Administration Building #2

There are systems & systems  
& this one doesn't work for  
me, though you do, which is  
why I urge you, dump this  
system, it's only there to hang  
you from a flagpole & make  
you wave & give you a wedgie &  
then you'll have to write the  
same poem a thousand times,

& see the way they posture &  
pull each other down & make  
up funny names for each other &  
the whole thing ends in a dialogue  
not intelligent enough to be even  
Rabelaisian & that's really saying  
something & so am I, here, now—  
when they bid you, don't bow—

### South Philly, 12 Steps Down, Whiskey Dream #3

I was alone, I rode,  
reddish, through tunnels,  
mucus walled, I nosed  
a way through, sans dope.  
I thought I was in the  
Void: I was wrong, this  
was just like a way to get  
to Brooklyn via spirit  
e-mail. I picked up the  
requisite drawl, Mona  
Lisa half-smile, sensual  
mutter, how to rub a  
woman's back, bathe  
her, give her a physical  
home. I was riding through  
you. I still haven't found  
what I'm looking for: no  
matter. No sin to go slow.

## What's Behind It...

It is not dying: where I  
go when I close my eyes  
& the world shuts in upon  
itself & gives me the womb  
of fear I need to forget fear.  
Nothing shines but the light  
at the end where I catch hold  
of myself floating inward/  
outward & I know how I  
connect to the cosmos &  
I am palpitating gently but  
intensely & separations do  
not exist except to point to  
deeper unities of sperm & egg  
& rhythm & motion & release  
& fucking & what's behind it  
& loving & what's behind it  
& dying & what's behind it  
& the answer is nothing,  
nothing at all, all or nothing,  
at one, a tone, atone

